

[Henry Schwindt]

[??] [??]

FORM A Circumstances of Interview

NAME OF WORKER [M.?] J. Moss-Henry Lickei [?] 6934 Francis St. [1002 [?] St.?)

DATE October 12, 1938 SUBJECT German-Russian Folklore

1. Name and address of informant Henry Swindt Schwindt , 1017 Charleston, City
2. Date and time of interview October 12, 9 a.m. to 11:10 a.m.
3. Place of interview Home of informant
4. Name and address of person, if any, who put you in touch with informant Henry Lickei, 1002 G St.
5. Name and address of person, if any, accompanying you Henry Lickei 1002 G St.
6. Description of room, house, surroundings, etc.

Cottage style, plain house on a high foundation, painted blue. This is located on the [Cal?] Creek bottoms or [Saline?] Plain. On account of floods nearly all the houses in this section of Lincoln are built on 4 or [?] foundations, nearly all this group of German-Russian people came from around [?], [Russia,?] The general surroundings [?], clean and well ordered and somewhat similar. C 15 Neb

FORM B Personal History of Informant

NAME OF WORKER H. J. Moss-Henry Lickei ADDRESS 6934 Francis-1002 G

Library of Congress

DATE October 12, 1938 SUBJECT German-Russian Folklore

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT Henry Swindt, 1017 Charleston, Lincoln, Nebr.

1. Ancestry German-Russian
2. Place and date of birth Norgia, Russia, Sept. 1, 1859 Mrs. Swindt Norgia, Russia, Mar. 28, 1860
3. Family eight children, 2 girls living, 1 in Lincoln, 1 in Utah
4. Places lived in, with dates Norgia, Russia, 1859 to [?]; Saratoff, Russia, 1889 to 1902; Lincoln, Nebr. June 6, 1902 to Date
5. Education, with dates Church school in Norgia, 1865 to 1875, mostly religious
6. Occupations and accomplishments, with dates Farming and stock raising, 1875 to 1889, Lumber mill, Saratoff, Russia, 1889 to 1902. 1875 to [?], served in Russian army.
7. Special skills and interests Lincoln, Nebraska worked for [?] section work, 1902 to 1908. Bought team and hauled garbage, 1908 to 1922; Lincoln street dept, 1922 to '[32?]'.
8. Community and religious activities Raising flowers, gardens. Biggest interest was farm work and stock. Helped neighbors. [?] Reformed Lutheran Church.
9. Description of informant Average type of old world; short of stature, features broad, high. Does not speak English much and prefers the native low German dialect.
10. Other points gained in interview

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Not especially alert, and [???]. Husband and wife, similar in type and character. Clean, orderly and still cling to old world regiment [&?] customs. Army influence left its mark. Content to live out life as is. Personality somewhat [?].

FORM C Text of Interview (Unedited)

NAME OF WORKER Harold [?] Moss-Henry Lickei ADDRESS 6934 Francis-1002 G

DATE October 12, 1938 SUBJECT German-Russian Folklore

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT Henry Swindt, 1017 Charleston, Lincoln

Our people went into Russia under the regiment of Queen Catherine. That was long before my time. They were Germans and [?]. That was why they were coaxed [???] Russia, as they needed lots of good farmers.

Most of us here are from Norgia, Russia. The German people lived in sort of a colony there and kept to themselves most of the time.

Farming was the work that gave them a living. They did not live right on the land but had their homes in the village. Each day the people went out to their farms to work. The whole family worked in the fields there, and they do that here also. In Russia, a group of workers or families would exchange work and see that anyone who needed it, would get help. They often would have a common storehouse and [kept?] a lot of grain and other things ready to give to the ones who needed it.

When I went to school there, it was a church school and they taught the religion of our church.

Children all had to work also at home before and after school. The school I went to was just one big room and I don't believe they had grades like they do here.

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They were taught as a group and soon learned that [the??] of the whole colony colony was [better than that] of the [?] himself.

I went into the Russian army in 1875 and stayed there until [?].

I wasn't a good life and [everyone?] was [????] of it. Our people were not afraid of devils or witches but [?] around there were. There was a kind of [governor?] who looked after any trouble in the community. He is what you would call a policeman.

There didn't seem to be the sickness there is now and most people never had a doctor who wouldn't be much good anyway.

Boiled cabbage juice and bean stalk root juice was a good medicine and was made and used by many of [the women and men?].

Roots and herbs were made into tea and kept for medicine. Birth Lore

When a woman is looking for a new child, neighbors and friends begin to get together clothing for the newly born.

After the child is born and the mother is still in bed, neighbors and friends would bring food for the mother, which was usually chicken and noodle soup.

After the mother is up and around in about two or three weeks, the child is taken by the mother and sponsors, to the church to be baptized. They call the sponsors the godfather and godmother. These could be relatives or just friends.

The baby is never taken out in public until after the baptism. The minister has a bowl full of water and as he says [the?] verse he dips his hand in the bowl and drops the water on the baby's forehead.

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After the ceremony the minister and sponsors usually gather at the house of the parents and celebrate the event. The sponsors nearly always give the child presents at Easter and Christmas until the child is 16 years old. The father and mother pick out the sponsors themselves. They usually name the child after one of the sponsors.

In this country it is often believed that if the mother, before the birth of the child, goes in a show or theatre and becomes frightened at some rough or violent scene, the child would have a marking of some kind (birthmark). There is a boy living right here in this neighborhood who is said to be cripple because his mother went to a show before he was born and saw a scene of crippled people. The boy seems to be like the cripple who the mother saw at this show.

The custom of baptism is used at this time in this country and state. Babies are mostly dressed in white. Marriage Lore

When young people want to get married in Russia, their godfathers go out and pick out a mate for them. They boy would go with the sponsor and this would help to find a suitable girl for him.

Sometimes the young man gets a wife whom he never saw before. When a girl has been selected then the boy is introduced to her and they commence their courtship. But the girl is already selected to be his wife, so that is all understood and [they go to?] church and appear before the congregation for the people to [??] in this marriage. After three weeks the wedding takes place. The regular marriage ceremony and party is carried on from there. [?]

We came back here in 1902, [June?] G. My brother [???] come. He wanted to leave Russia anyway as our people began to fear that something bad was going to happen.

My brother told me work and pay and [living?] was much better here and the people were free and could [??] as they wanted to. Most of those who came here, thought this was so.

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It was not quite as good as they expected but better than Russia. I worked six years for the railroad and then bought a team and took a garbage route. Later I worked for the city street department.

I like flowers and gardens and we worked at them a lot. Our people here all nearly like this because when young in the old country they did that more than anything else.

The customs of the Russian-German people began to change here in 1920 and now they are forgotten by the younger people.

But they still all stick together and work together. Although the group is starting to scatter out now.

We [took?] out our citizen papers in [1912?]